

WWBLD?—WHAT WOULD BROTHER LEE DO? LSM's *MODUS OPERANDI*

Not long ago fashion-conscious Christians had bracelets, bumper-stickers, T-shirts and even tattoos emblazoned with the letters—WWJD?—What Would Jesus Do? This fad never caught on in the “Lord’s Recovery.” It was considered too superficial. The WWJD slogan was interpreted as an exhortation to imitate Christ. In the local churches the idea of imitating Christ, dating back to Thomas à Kempis’ 15th-century classic, *The Imitation of Christ*, was roundly condemned. Bro. Lee taught that Christians do not imitate Christ; they are “one spirit” with Him (1 Cor. 6:17).¹ In contrast to WWJD, the Recovery’s last-known bumper-sticker bore the enigma, “Live Christ.” Given its dogmatic stand against WWJD, it is ironic that the Recovery’s² *modus operandi* has become—WWBLD?—What Would Brother Lee Do?³ Yet this principle governs the adoption or rejection of practices in LSM’s local churches. The criterion for evaluating practical matters is not “what does the Scripture say?” (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 4:30). Nor “how is the Holy Spirit leading?” Instead, LSM’s “blended brothers” argue for (or against) certain practices, based on Brother W. Lee’s attitude—would Brother Lee approve or disapprove? To ensure the Recovery follows the WWBLD principle, precedents are sought in Brother Lee’s past decisions and directives. Why, for example, does LSM have “seven annual feasts (conferences)”⁴? It is because⁴ “Brother Lee wanted seven feasts a year.” What justifies LSM’s “blended brothers’ One Publication”⁵ edict?—The precedent established by Brother Lee’s 1986 “One Publication” proclamation. Bro. Lee’s own rationale was his personal exercise when co-working with Watchman Nee in China. The end result is that Bro. Lee’s personal practice—WWBLD—was imposed on all local churches via LSM’s “One Publication” policy. Why did LSM’s “blended co-workers” demand Bro. Titus Chu subjugate his work⁶ to their “coordinated oversight”? Because Bro. W. Lee counselled certain “gifted brothers” to do this during a previous “turmoil.” Isn’t this in the principle of WWBLD? Below we cite other examples of LSM’s *modus operandi*—WWBLD? Before doing so, however, we ask—Why the paradox? Why does the Local Church reject the idea of imitating Christ while practicing the imitation of Brother W. Lee?

The Recovery’s Paradox—Don’t Imitate Christ, Imitate Brother Lee

LSM’s “blended brothers” promote the imitation of Witness Lee. For example, Bro. Benson Phillip’s states,⁷ “He [Brother Lee] said, ‘We need to imitate the apostle [Paul].’ To me this means that [we need to imitate Witness Lee.](#)” Thus Witness Lee is equated with the Apostle Paul and the exhortation to imitate Paul is transposed to Bro. W. Lee. However, we question their claim that Witness Lee equals Paul. In the 1st century, Paul was the first to evangelize Corinth, for example. He stayed for an extended period, begetting and nurturing the new believers. Hence Paul had the unique position, as their spiritual father, to charge the Corinthians “Be imitators of me, *as I also am of Christ*” (1 Cor. 11:1; 4:16). Moreover, Paul laid the foundation of the Corinthian Church (1 Cor. 3:10). After him, everyone else built on that foundation. In contrast to the Apostle Paul, Witness Lee ministered in the 20th century. There is no question of laying the Church’s initial foundation; now it is a matter of restoration (or “recovery”). Moreover, in contrast to Paul, few current local church members were saved directly through Witness Lee. Many received Christ prior to coming into “the Recovery.” Bro. Lee is not their “spiritual father” in the sense that Paul was to the Corinthians. Hence, the Corinthian believers’ life-relationship with the Apostle Paul is not replicated in Witness Lee’s case; neither is he the “hands-on” founding apostle of most local churches. Except for a few places (e.g. Taipei, Taiwan, Los Angeles & Anaheim, CA) Bro. W. Lee had little *direct involvement* in most local churches; Bro. Lee’s contribution cannot be compared to Paul’s participation in Corinth or Ephesus. Therefore we reject as unfounded the “blended brothers’” equating of Bro. W. Lee with the Apostle Paul.⁸ Moreover, even with Paul, his charge—“Be imitators of me, *as I also am of Christ*”—is not unconditional; it was conditional. The Corinthians were to mimic Paul in-so-far as he imitated Christ. This implies they are “observing” Christ and discern any discrepancy between Paul and his Master. This makes his admonition consistent with the exhortation, “Be...imitators of God, as beloved children” (Eph. 5:1). Elevating Bro. W. Lee to Paul’s status leads the “blended brothers” to invoke the WWBLD?-principle. On this basis they legislate practices “beyond what is written” in Scripture (1 Cor. 4:6,) as the following examples document. The net result of WWBLD?, is that LSM’s “local churches” conform to Witness Lee’s image, adopt his attitudes and (despite predictable denials) have abandoned their position as genuine local churches, becoming the Witness Lee denomination.

Dramas and Plays—"Spiritual Incest" producing "Moabites and Ammonites"

LSM-president, Benson Phillips roundly condemns the use of dramas and plays in the local churches. He categorizes these as "improper and worldly means" to "gain people by spiritual incest." The people gained through such means are branded as "Moabites and Ammonites." Bro. Benson alleges that⁹ "in order to gain the increase, some churches have gone back to Christianity's way of meeting to make the new contacts feel comfortable. This way is the way to gain Moabites and Ammonites. It is not the way the Lord wants..." He rebukes such behaviour, recounting,¹⁰

"Brother Lee never used improper means to carry out the Lord's move. Once, a brother was helping with a graduation program for the children. It had a lot of dramas and plays. Brother Lee came and saw it. He did not say a word; he just walked out. Later, among all the co-workers he said to this brother, 'What have you done? In seventy years in the Lord's recovery we have never used dramas, plays, or these kinds of activities. Yet you have brought this into the Lord's recovery after seventy years. What are you doing?' This brother was not directly responsible, but Brother Lee held him accountable in this way."

This addresses the practical question—can the local churches use dramas and plays? Clearly Benson Phillips rejects this practice. What is the basis for his vehement opposition? Notice the principle employed in evaluating this question is not—what does the Scripture say? (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 4:30). Nor is it—How is the Holy Spirit leading us? The sole criterion is—what was Bro. W. Lee's attitude? He cites one example, taken, not from a local church meeting, but from a children's graduation ceremony. As Bro. Benson tells it, "Brother Lee came and saw [a lot of dramas and plays.] He did not say a word; he just walked out." Reportedly, Bro. Lee condemned this activity, saying, "In seventy years in the Lord's recovery we have never used dramas, plays, or these kinds of activities." For Bro. Benson, this is sufficient basis for censure; No appeal to Scripture is required. Brother Lee rejected dramas and plays; so should the local churches. Evidently, this prohibition includes not only church meetings and young peoples' gatherings, it also extends to children's meetings—no more children's dramas or skits! Here then is LSM's *modus operandi*—Bro. Lee's evaluation decides the issue, his personal feeling about dramas and plays dictates the actions of all the local churches—WWBLD? Yet, in fact, isn't there drama in the Bible?¹¹ Even in the New Testament, didn't the prophet Agabus "perform a skit" to warn the apostle Paul (Acts 21:10-11)?

Answering to Brother Lee OR the Lord Jesus Christ?

To LSM-president, Benson Phillips the logic of WWBLD is perfectly reasonable. He argues,¹²

"In practice we have to take someone's view—either our own view, the view of the brothers, or the view of the minister of the age [W. Lee]. The safe way...is to take the view of the minister of the age...Witness Lee served the Lord in the recovery for over 70 years...Why would we not take his opinion, his view, and his teaching. We should take everything...and speak everything."

According to Bro. Benson, local church-members have only three options. They have "to take someone's view" or opinion—either their own, the brothers or Bro. W. Lee. "The safe way," Bro. Benson says, "is to take the view of the minister of the age...Witness Lee." Yet this is a false trichotomy. Whatever happened to seeking the Lord's will? What about the Holy Spirit's leading? Unfortunately, it seems that, for LSM's "blended brothers," answering to Brother Lee has replaced responsibility to Christ. Thus, after condemning certain practices, Bro. Benson declares,¹³ "If I saw Brother Lee today, I could only say, 'I am sorry that today such a thing is in the recovery for which you labored.' Seven years after he passed away, this is where we are." Shouldn't these brothers be asking instead—"When I see the Lord in that day, what will I say?" (Rom. 14:10; 2 Cor. 5:10)?

"It's hard to say what's the scriptural way...But...rock music or drama...are wrong"—W. Lee

LSM-president, Benson Phillips admonishes the local churches to adopt Bro. Lee's view, opinion and teaching. Discerning believers might wish to know the biblical basis of Brother Lee's views on issues like drama and music. The following quote provides the answer. Bro. W. Lee said,¹⁴

"It is hard to say what is the scriptural way to meet. We have published...*How to Meet*. If you read it, however, you will still be puzzled as to the proper way to meet. **But I do know that dancing or rock music or drama in the meetings are wrong.**"

There you have it! On one hand, Bro. Lee admits the Bible does not mandate a definitive scriptural way to meet. This matches Watchman Nee's assertion, that¹⁵ "in the New Testament there are no ordinances telling us how we should meet." Yet, on the other hand, W. Lee states

adamantly "I do know that dancing or rock music or drama in the meetings are wrong." The sole basis for this dogmatic statement is Bro. Lee's own subjective feeling! No doubt Bro. Lee was a "spiritual man," much used by the Lord; yet he was also a mortal man, influenced by his background and culture; he had his own personal preferences. He lived in the 20th century and spent the majority of his years in the Orient. These factors surely influenced his opinions and preferences. Even the Apostle Paul distinguished between his personal opinion and God's Spirit (1 Cor. 7). It's time to differentiate between Bro. Witness Lee's personal preference (regarding music, drama etc.) and God's Spirit. When expressing his opinion, Paul added "but I think that I also have the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 7:40). In this instance Paul's opinion was confirmed as God's feeling when it became Scripture, God's inspired Word. In the case of Bro. Lee's opinion, we have no such confirmation. Witness Lee's opinion is *not* embodied in God's Word. Nor is the "interpreted word" (W. Lee's messages) equal to God's "inspired word" in Scripture. We cannot *arbitrarily assume* his opinion reflects God's will and "the Body's feeling." Practical issues, such as music, dramas, ought to be evaluated in the light of Scripture under the Holy Spirit's guidance. The appropriate question is *not* WWBLD? Rather, we should ask—"What does the Scripture say?" (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 4:30) and "What is the Spirit saying to the churches?" (Rev. 2:7).

"Brother Lee hated Christianity"—James Lee

Charismatics & Free Groups produce "Moabites & Ammonites" by Spiritual Incest

In a surprisingly candid statement James Lee admits that Bro. W. Lee hated Christianity. He is quoted saying¹⁶ "He [Brother Lee] hated Christianity..." Evidently Brother Lee was not averse to expressing his animosity, occasionally coercing Scripture for this purpose. For example he interprets the Old Testament account of Lot's dysfunctional family (Genesis 19) to denounce the Charismatic movement and Christian "free groups" ("House churches.") After fleeing Sodom, Lot produced two sons (Ammon & Moab) through incest with his two daughters. Brother Lee uses Lot's abhorrent act to denounce his fellow-believers' methods of evangelism. He lambastes,¹⁷

"groups [which] use rock music, dancing, drama, movies, and games to satisfy their desire of securing the increase. In the eyes of God, **this is spiritual incest**. The free groups adopt these methods...Once people have lost...the function in life, they use ugly and worldly means for securing the increase. **This is the way of 'incest' which brings forth 'Moabites' and 'Ammonites'.**"

In a sweeping generalization Bro. Lee condemns¹⁸ "Many Christian groups [who]...like Lot's daughters, desire to have the seed but do not care for the proper means. They may say, 'Let us go to win souls,' but they win souls through the way of spiritual incest." People saved through these "improper means" are condemned as "Ammonites and Moabites." Thus W. Lee says,¹⁹ "rock music and other gimmicks...may bring some people to the Lord...**but all such will be Moabites**. They will be the sons of Lot, brought forth in an improper way, by Lot with his daughters (Gen. 19:30-38). **Too many Christians are Moabites, born improperly.**" This is a serious accusation; Moabites were excluded from God's people for 10 generations! Millions of believers are labeled as "Moabites"! Bro. James Lee reiterates LSM's stock response—²⁰ "**Brother Lee...hated Christianity, not the people, but the system.**" However, by stigmatizing believers as "Moabites and Ammonites," Bro. Lee is *not* just attacking "Christianity's system," he is denigrating "the people"—God's people. Isn't this slander? In response, we ask—is this exposition firmly based on explicit New Testament teachings? On what basis can the Old Testament record of Lot's dysfunctional family be co-opted to denounce certain gospel methods as "spiritual incest" and denigrate other believers as "Moabites and Ammonites"? Which New Testament writer said this? Isn't this merely personal preference cloaked as Scriptural exegesis? In contrast the Apostle Paul displayed a generous attitude towards gospel-preaching motivated by rivalry, strife and pretense (Phil. 1:15-18); he didn't stigmatize such preaching as "spiritual incest," nor the fruit as "Moabites and Ammonites." In denouncing fellow-Christians with negative stereotypes like "Ammonites and Moabites," is Bro. Lee imitating the Apostle Paul? Sadly Bro. Lee's attitude is replicated by the "blended brothers" and their followers.

Contemporary Christian Music—A "Golden Calf," a "Different Teaching"

LSM's "blended brothers" virulently condemn contemporary Christian music. Bro. Benson censures a brother's²¹ "website with all kinds of hymns that are full of worldly tunes." This, he denounces as "using worldly means...to gain people by spiritual incest." Great Lakes area activities,

like "MountainTop" and "Ignite," were implicitly attacked. Benson Phillips says²² "At a certain young peoples' gathering they have rock bands. Is that God's way? Is that not a different teaching?" Instead of the neutral term, "contemporary Christian music," Bro. Benson uses the loaded expression, "rock bands." Moreover, he asks, rhetorically, "Is that not a different teaching?" However, he fails to explain how alternate music styles amount to a "different teaching"! In the Recovery, the phrase "different teaching" is pejorative, implying different from God's economy (1 Tim. 1:3-4). Similarly, Bro. James Lee reports with horror,²³ "I recently saw a video clip from a so-called young people's conference...It could have been an activity for young people in Christianity or even in the world. I was shocked..." Again reference is made to Brother Lee's attitude. Bro. James Lee alleges,²⁴ "Some today have been distracted into following the 'mega-church' movement in order to gain a crowd by any means, including rock music, fun activities, performances, and plays. I believe that [if Brother Lee were here to see such things, he would be sickened](#) and would prostrate himself before the Lord. We all need to prostrate ourselves..." Once again Bro. W. Lee's attitude—"Brother Lee...would be sickened"—is the decisive consideration—WWBLD?

LSM's "blended brothers'" denunciation of "rock music" is not limited to the Great Lakes area. Brazil's local churches are also condemned. While visiting South America, LSM's senior editor, Ron Kangas, was told music in Brazilian local churches²⁵ "is a big production with drums and lots of instruments." Reportedly, Bro. Ron responded,²⁶ "To use the music in this way is [to set up the golden calf](#) and call it God." With one sweeping assertion, Brazilian churches' music is condemned as an idolatrous "golden calf." Rather than a balanced Scriptural teaching regarding music, instruments and worship, LSM's "blended brothers" use the Bible as a "happy hunting ground," furnishing negative types to condemn other believers and local churches. For example LSM's Ron Kangas derides²⁷ "Christian rock" as "leaven," "mixture" and the "way of the nations."

Denying the Recovery's History

Participants in the 1970's church-life in North America recall the Recovery's "contemporary music" of that period. The Lord blessed the Recovery through the "Jesus Movement." Many young people were added to the local churches. They were excited about Christ and the Church. Out of their enjoyment, they wrote many songs using familiar tunes—contemporary music, including folk music, pop music, TV commercials and (even) rock music! Many "recovered songs" circulated in "supplements" published in that era. These songs (with their tunes) were an essential part of the vibrant church-life attracting young people and Jesus-seekers to the Recovery. The Appendix lists some "recovered songs" from the 1970s church-life. They include contemporary popular and rock music tunes (e.g. Elvis Presley and The Beatles.) Today LSM's "blended brothers" denounce local churches for using "rock music." They allege that²⁸ "Some groups use rock music...[for] securing the increase; in the eyes of God this is spiritual incest, which brings forth 'Moabites' and 'Ammonites'." However, they are vulnerable to the charge of hypocrisy. The Recovery used "recovered songs" set to "rock music" in the 1970s. Many recall singing "Do you know what you were made for?" to *The Beatles* tune, "Yellow Submarine." Others remember singing "First man, Adam, then temptation..." to John Denver's "Country Road." A song, "When you say Lord (Jesus)" was composed to a Budweiser beer commercial tune! We ask—applying Bro. W. Lee's evaluation (echoed by LSM's "blended brothers") retroactively to the 1970s—was that "spiritual incest"? Were those gained "Moabites and Ammonites"? Was that a "golden calf"? It seems, in order to condemn others LSM's "blended brothers" willfully ignore the Recovery's own history from the 1970s! Isn't this applying a double standard?

Not WWJD? But WWBLD?—Producing the Witness Lee Denomination

LSM's "blended brothers" malign the Christian mnemonic—WWJD? Bro. Minoru Chen exhorts fellow church-members not to²⁹ "continually ask ourselves, '**What would Jesus do?**' Rather, we should inwardly live according to the spirit and contact the Lord, live by Him and take Him as our person." This recalls the Recovery's bumper-sticker, "Live Christ." Yet why isn't this principle used to evaluate issues like drama and music? Concerning such practices, LSM's "blended brothers" apply another principle—WWBLD?—What Would Brother Lee Do? This is the deciding factor on issues like publications, music, dramas (to name just a few). Concerning these topics the New Testament gives no definitive injunctions. As Watchman Nee stated,¹⁵ "in the New Testament there

are no ordinances telling us how we should meet.” Issues like these should be examined in the light of Scripture under the Holy Spirit’s leading—“What the Spirit speaks to the local churches” (Rev. 2:7). They should not be decided based on a leader’s personal preferences. Bro. W. Lee expressed strong personal opinions about drama, music etc. In expressing his views Bro. Lee articulated his animosity towards Christianity. He is on record stigmatizing his fellow-believers as “Moabites and Ammonites,” begotten by “spiritual incest.”

Over a year has passed since 60+ Evangelical scholars called on LSM and the Local Church leadership to³⁰ “renounce statements made by [Bro.] Lee that denigrate evangelical Christian denominations” and to cease³¹ “promot[ing] Witness Lee’s denigrating characterizations of such [evangelical] churches and ministries.” However, rather than distancing themselves from Bro. W. Lee’s radical views, LSM’s “blended brothers” reiterate his position. They claim their³² “disagreement with denominationalism **does not in any way constitute a rejection of the believers** within that system.” Yet, by denouncing believers as “Moabites and Ammonites” (peoples excluded from God’s congregation for 10 generations) aren’t they *de facto* rejecting such Christians? LSM’s “blended brothers” seem determined to perpetuate, in their entirety, Witness Lee’s teachings, practices and his attitudes, including the denigration of other believers. Their teachings are characterized by “What Did Brother Lee Say?” The phrase, “Brother Lee said” appears innumerable times in LSM’s *The Ministry* magazine. This over-rides the biblical principle “What does the Scripture say?” (Rom. 4:3; Gal. 4:30) because, in their view,³³ “What [Brother Lee] spoke was simply what the Bible speaks!” Concerning practices, LSM’s “blended brothers” *modus operandi* is—WWBLD?—“What Would Brother Lee Do? LSM’s federation of “local churches” adopt Bro. Lee’s attitudes and teachings, wholesale. In so doing they have abandoned their status as genuine local churches. Despite claims to the contrary, they are (in fact) a Witness Lee denomination.³⁴

Nigel Tomes,

Toronto, Canada

April 2008

Notes:

1. One of LSM’s “blended brothers,” Minoru Chen summarizes the Local Church’s attitude to WWJD?: “**This does not mean** that we should continually ask ourselves, ‘**What would Jesus do?**’ Rather, we should inwardly live according to the spirit and contact the Lord, live by Him and take Him as our person.” [MC, *The Ministry*, Vol. 7, No. 2, (March 2003) p. 120, emphasis added] We describe the slogan, “Live Christ” (a bumper-sticker used in the 1970s Recovery) as an “enigma” because the public were left to figure out the intended meaning--whether “live” was a verb or an adjective (Is “Live Christ” akin to “live bait”?)
2. *modus operandi*—Latin: manner of operating, a distinct pattern or method of operation, characteristic method
3. Perhaps the mnemonic, WWBLD would be more appealing to some of the “LSM-faithful” if they realized it can be expounded as: **What Would Build**? i.e. What Would Build up the Body of Christ? For many of the “LSM-faithful” the answer to that question is identical to the one posed—What Would Brother Lee Do? It seems, in the minds of many “LSM-faithful,” whatever Brother Lee would do corresponds exactly to what would build up Christ’s Body!
4. EM, *The Ministry*, vol. 11, No. 2 (February 2007) p. 244 The quote in context reads: “The main person who is causing the present turmoil in the Lord’s recovery claims that he knows for certain that Brother Lee said that each year there should be only five ‘feasts’ or five gatherings of the saints, not seven...The person who is making this claim was not even present when Brother Lee made the decision regarding the seven annual feasts, yet he claims to know what Brother Lee said...**Brother Lee wanted seven feasts a year.**” [EM, *The Ministry*, vol. 11, No. 2 (February 2007) pp. 243-4, emphasis added] Notice that the argument, on both sides, hinges on “what Brother Lee said,” “what Brother Lee wanted.”
5. *Publication Work in the Lord’s Recovery* by the “blended co-workers” (LSM, July, 2005). The “blended co-workers” cite Brother Lee’s testimony as a precedent. They quote Brother Lee concerning his personal practice regarding publications, saying “I never published anything by myself. I always mailed my manuscript to the Gospel Book Room which was under Brother Lee...” (p. 3.) Notice that LSM’s “One Publication” policy mandates Bro. Lee’s personal exercise as the norm for all saints and churches in the

recovery. Through LSM's "One Publication" edict, Bro. Lee's personal practice—WWBLD--became a requirement imposed upon the saints and churches in the Recovery.

6. In a June 2005 Letter, LSM's "blended co-workers" directed Brother Titus Chu to "join yourself and those co-workers loyal to you to the blending co-workers, with the continuation of your previous work left to... their coordinated oversight." [Letter to Titus Chu from 21 "blended co-workers" dated June 4, 2005] Why? Because this is what Bro. W. Lee advised certain "gifted brothers" to do in an earlier "turmoil." Notice that this Letter's directive assumes that the "blended co-workers" have "inherited" the right, position and authority to do whatever Bro. W. Lee did or would have done. The failure of Bro. Titus Chu to comply with this directive led to his subsequent "quarantine" in October 2006 at Whistler, BC, Canada.
7. The statement, in context, reads "**We need to imitate the apostle** [Paul] to bring the local churches into the fellowship of the Body of Christ (Rom. 14:3; 15:7-9, 25-33) and follow the apostle's footsteps to bring all the saints into the blending life of the entire Body of Christ (chp. 16)...This was Brother Lee's last conference, and this is what **he said, 'We need to imitate the apostle [Paul].'** **To me this means that we need to imitate Witness Lee** to bring the local churches into the fellowship of the Body of Christ." [BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, no. 2, February 2005, p. 107, emphasis added] As a further example of the "blended brother" tendency to equate Bro. W. Lee with the Apostle Paul, consider Ron Kangas' identification of both W. Lee and Paul as "wise master-builders." Bro. Ron Kangas states: "In the New Testament there were many apostles. ...but not all apostles were wise master builders. In any generation of God's building, **there is one and only one master builder. Paul was one....**In this age, we were privileged to be perfected by a wise master builder.... **Brother Lee could not say it then, but we can say it today: He was the wise master builder; he was the minister of the age, he had the design, and he could oversee the work.**" [RK, *The Ministry*, vol. 10, No. 1, (Jan./Feb. 2006) pp. 149-50]
8. On occasion Bro. W. Lee distinguished between himself and the Apostle Paul. For example, W. Lee said, "The teaching of the apostles was completed by Paul's teaching. Paul told us clearly in Colossians 1:25 that **his ministry** was to complete the word of God, which means to complete the teaching of the apostles, to **complete the revelation of the New Testament. I had no part in this completion work so I do not add anything to the apostles' teaching.**" [W. Lee, *One Accord for the Lord's Move, Elders' Training Book*, 7, p. 42]
9. BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 8, no. 6, (June 2004) p. 97
10. BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 8, no. 6, (June 2004) p. 97
11. See John Myer's e-book, entitled, *A Future & A Hope*, Chapter 8, "Church Life Beyond "the Work" (3)—Dispelling Misunderstandings About Methods," available at: <http://www.assemblylife.com/> for a more extensive discussion of these issues.
12. BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 7, No. 6 (Aug. 2003) p. 39
13. BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 8, no. 6, (June 2004) p. 99 I do not question the brothers' sincerity, however something is seriously wrong when the prospect of answering to a man (in this case, Brother Witness Lee) supersedes answering to Christ. Brother Benson says, "If I saw Brother Lee today, I could only say, 'I am sorry...'" Why doesn't he say, "When I meet the Lord Jesus Christ..." The Bible says, "We will all stand before the judgement seat of God...So then each one of us will give an account concerning himself to God." (Rom. 14: 10, 11)
14. The quote, in context, reads: "How are we to determine if our way of meeting is scriptural? While no one can say that our meetings are unscriptural, **it is hard to say what is the scriptural way to meet.** We have published a book called *How to Meet*. If you read it, however, you will still be puzzled as to the proper way to meet. **But I do know that dancing or rock music or drama in the meetings are wrong. Having soloists is wrong. These things are not only wrong, they are against the Lord's way.** The Lord is still recovering the proper way to meet. [W. Lee, *The World Situation & God's Move*, (spoken in 1981) p. 38, emphasis added]
15. The context of this quote was after Witness Lee attended a Pentecostal meeting with W. Nee. W. Lee reported: "I said 'What kind of way is this to have meetings—shouting, jumping and rolling?' He [W. Nee] replied **that in the New Testament there are no ordinances telling us how we should meet.** His [W. Nee's] word shocked me [W. Lee]..." [W. Lee, *Watchman Nee—Seer of the Divine Revelation...* p. 287]
16. The quote, in context, reads: "**He [Brother Lee] hated Christianity** as a system because it held God's people back." [JL, *The Ministry*, vol. 11, No. 2 (February 2007) p. 110, emphasis added.] Earlier, in the same speaking, James Lee makes a similar statement: "Brother Lee expressed a number of times that **he hated Christianity**, not the people, but the system, because it holds back God's people." [JL, *The Ministry*, vol. 11, No. 2 (February 2007) p. 109, emphasis added.]
17. The quote, in context, reads: "some groups use rock music, dancing, drama, movies, and games to satisfy their desire of securing the increase. In the eyes of God, this is spiritual incest. The free groups adopt these methods because the wife, being worldly, has lost her function. In the churches we need the function of life to produce seed. Once people have lost the proper wife with the function in life, they use

ugly and worldly means for securing the increase. This is the way of 'incest' which brings forth 'Moabites' and 'Ammonites'." [W. Lee, *Life-study, of Genesis* Message #54, p. 721] Elsewhere, W. Lee denounces the Charismatic Movement in particular saying: "I have to point out the shortcomings of the present situation in the charismatic movement. **In charismatic meetings, they sometimes use rock music, dramas, and all kinds of performances to attract people. These are all gimmicks.** The use of these gimmicks shows that the power of the Spirit is lacking. If we have the real power of the Spirit, we do not need any gimmicks." [W. Lee, *Preaching the Gospel on the College Campuses*, Chp. 1]

18. The quote, in context, reads: "Many Christian groups today also have such improper members. They, like Lot's daughters, desire to have the seed but do not care for the proper means. They may say, 'Let us go to win souls,' but they win souls through the way of spiritual incest." [W. Lee, *Life-study of Genesis*, Message #54, p.] Along the same lines, W. Lee says "This is also the situation among many so-called Christian groups. They have lost the function of the Body of Christ, the proper function of life, and use worldly methods to fill the gap. Like Lot's group, they cannot produce the proper "Isaac" for the fulfilling of God's purpose. Because they use incest to secure seed, they produce 'Moabites' and 'Ammonites'." [W. Lee, *Life-study, of Genesis* Message #54, p. 721]
19. W. Lee, *The World Situation & God's Move*, (spoken in 1981) p. 37. The quote, in context, reads: "Those who use rock music and other gimmicks in their gospel preaching may bring some people to the Lord by these means, but all such will be Moabites. They will be the sons of Lot, brought forth in an improper way, by Lot with his daughters (Gen. 19:30-38). Too many Christians are Moabites, born improperly. Today the Lord is again recovering the proper gospel preaching." [W. Lee, *The World Situation & God's Move*, p. 37]
20. "Brother Lee expressed a number of times that **he hated Christianity, not the people**, but the system, because it holds back God's people." [JL, *The Ministry*, vol. 11, No. 2 (Feb. 2007) p. 109, emphasis add.]
21. BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 8, no. 6, (June 2004) p. 97. This quote in context reads: "There is another website that plays all kinds of music and repeatedly says, 'Do you hear the beat?' That may bring some into demonic activity. Starting from church websites, you can end up at this **website with all kinds of hymns that are full of worldly tunes**...In these situations...we [are] **using worldly means...to gain people by spiritual incest.**" [BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 8, no. 6, (June 2004) p. 97 emphasis added to part quoted in the text] The context of Benson's speaking is the application of "The record of Lot's family and his seed by incest" (p. 94)—the Moabites and Ammonites.
22. BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 10, No. 1 (Jan/Feb. 2006) p. 288. We should ask—Did Brother Benson directly contact the GLA brothers coordinating these young peoples' activities, prior to launching his public attack? The answer is a definite, "No." In dealing with this matter, which obviously offended him, Bro. Benson **did not** apply the guidelines of Matthew 18.
23. JL, *The Ministry*, vol. 11, No. 2 (February 2007) p. 96
24. JL, *The Ministry*, vol. 11, No. 2 (February 2007) p. 97
25. The following is a report on Ron Kangas' Feb. 2007 visit to Ecuador, S. America, posted on the pro-LSM website, "lastadam.com: "QUESTION: Laertes asked about **MUSIC in Brazil. "It is a big production with drums and lots of instruments**...If you try to touch it, there is strong reaction."
RK: "**To use the music in this way is to set up the golden calf and call it God.** In Exodus 32 God told us how He feels about this." Ron Kangas, 02/02/07 9:00 am, Milagro, Ecuador (the patio of Sister Illena's house/school) (Notes by DWV: Dr. David W. Vinson from Irving, TX? on www.lastadam.com, a pro-LSM website)
26. (Notes by DWV: Dr. David W. Vinson from Irving, TX? Posted on www.lastadam.com, a pro-LSM website)
27. Ron Kangas asks: "Is the Lord's recovery pure in its music?...Some seek to have a big increase in numbers. They say out truth is too hard or too high...Therefore they add in **leaven, following the way of the nations.** They say that these people...can come to our meeting halls and hear **Christian rock** followed by a short gospel message and be saved...**This is mixture.**" [RK, *The Ministry*, vol. 9, No. 3 (March 2005) p. 16, emphasis added]
28. BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 8, no. 6, (June 2004) p. 93. In context Benson says, "Some groups use rock music, drama, movies, and games to satisfy their desire of securing the increase; in the eyes of God this is spiritual incest, which brings forth 'Moabites and Ammonites. Lot and his two daughters were God's people, but they used improper means to gain increase." [BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 8, no. 6, (June 2004) p. 93.] Most of this statement appears in the LSM outline quoting Bro. W. Lee, from *Life-study of Genesis*. However, it is Bro. Benson Phillips who makes the application to certain Internet websites, drama and "rock music" at "certain young peoples' conferences" etc. Elsewhere Benson says, "At a certain young peoples' gathering **they have rock bands.** Is that God's way? Is that not a different teaching?" [BP, *The Ministry*, vol. 10, No. 1 (Jan/Feb. 2006) p. 288, emphasis added]
29. Minoru Chen states "**This does not mean** that we should continually ask ourselves, '**What would Jesus do?**' Rather, we should inwardly live according to the spirit and contact the Lord, live by Him and take Him as our person." [MC, *The Ministry*, Vol. 7, No. 2, (March 2003) p. 120, emphasis added]

30. News Release (dated) January 9, 2007 60 Evangelical Christian Scholars' Open Letter,
31. 60+ Evangelical Christian Scholars' Open Letter, January 9, 2007, see: www.open-letter.org. The 60+ (later 70+) scholars were critical of "Witness Lee's harsh characterizations of evangelical Christian denominations as 'apostate' and 'utilized by Satan to set up his satanic system,' [while simultaneously] Living Stream Ministry has sought alliances with high-profile evangelical groups. LSM was successful in its 2002 bid to join the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA)."
32. LSM's Brief Response to the Evangelical Scholars' "Open Letter" states: "we cannot agree with the present denominational system. But we hope that everyone will be absolutely clear that **our disagreement with denominationalism does not in any way constitute a rejection of the believers within that system**, nor does it call into question the validity of their salvation or their full participation in the eternal destiny of all God's redeemed—the hope of glory in Christ. This represents the clear teaching of Watchman Nee and Witness Lee on these points, and we believe that this is in complete harmony with Scripture." [A Brief Response to "An Open Letter to the Leadership of Living Stream Ministry and the 'Local Churches'" posted on <http://lctestimony.org/OpenLetterDialogue.html>, emphasis added.]
33. Consider Bro. Ed Marks' assertion: "Many times [Brother Lee] would remind us to say, 'The Bible says,' not '**Brother Lee says,**' even though **what he spoke was simply what the Bible speaks.**" [EM, *The Ministry*, Vol. 9, No. 6, (June 2005) p. 179, emphasis added] Here Witness Lee's speaking is equated to the Bible, the inspired Word of God—"What [Brother Lee] spoke **was**...what the Bible speaks," (emphasis added) LSM's *The Ministry* magazine contains innumerable references to "Brother Lee said." The frequency of the phrase "Brother Lee said" should be compared to the frequency of "the Bible says," or "the Scripture says."
34. The description of "the Recovery" and LSM's "Local Churches" as "the Witness Lee denomination" would appear justified based upon Bro. W. Lee's own word. He said, "A great problem among Christians today is their oldness. Many turn to old expositions or cling to the old **teachings of their denomination. Lutherans**, for instance, may **check matters by what Luther says.**" [W. Lee, *Life-study of Mark*, p. 280, emphasis added.] Note the link between the "Lutheran denomination" and "what Luther says." LSM's *The Ministry* magazine contains innumerable references to "Brother Lee said," fulfilling the prerequisite for the designation, "Witness Lee denomination."

APPENDIX A: Examples of Young People's Songs in the 1970s:

Examples of secular, popular and "rock music" tunes used in the 1970s church-life:

Song book #	First line	Original title	Author, source
Song Book 57	There's a life that's deeper than our mind	Top of the world	Carpenters
Song Book 47	From my heart comes a melody	Can't help falling in love with you	Elvis Presley
Hymns 1326	What is living all about	Doe a deer	Sound of Music
	Christ the real life-giver	Puff the magic dragon	Peter, Paul & Mary
Song Book 110	Christ is life Hallelujah for this	Knock Three Times	Tony Orlando and Dawn
	Jesus Lord, Jesus Lord	Edelweiss	Sound of Music
	Sing Aloud Your Praises to the Lord of All		Hebrew National Anthem
Old Supplement 127	We've found the thing that puts fear in the devil	My favourite things	Sound of Music
Song Book 119	If you are empty	Downtown	Petula Clark
Song Book 76	I just existed empty	Killing me softly	Charles Fox & Norman Gimbel
	Once I was an empty man	Sounds of silence	Simon & Garfunkel
Song Book 37	Lord there's always been	How can I love Him	Jesus Christ

	one person		Superstar - musical
	Say friend, its up to you	Hey Jude	The Beatles
Song Book 106	Do you know what you were made for?	Yellow Submarine	The Beatles
	We are the Generation, the Lord has waited for	Who knows how much I love you? (Tune: I Will)	The Beatles [White Album]
	Having Things, Having what there is to have of...	Yesterday	The Beatles
Song Book 133	First man Adam, then temptation..	Country Road	John Denver
Song Book 166	When you say "Lord"	When you say "Budweiser"	Budweiser TV commercial
	Jesus Lord You're our First Love...	Secret Love	Doris Day